



# **Creative Age Management Strategies for SMEs in the Baltic Sea Region**

## **Annex 1: Country Studies DENMARK**

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[www.best-agers-project.eu](http://www.best-agers-project.eu)

## The Kingdom of Denmark



### Socio-Demographic Situation (Selected Indicators)

Indicators	Denmark	Europe (EU 27)
Area	43,094 sq. km	4,324,782 sq. km
Population (2007)	5,468,120	495,400,000
Population density (pop. per sq. km)	126 inhabitants per sq. km	115 Inhabitants per sq. km
Capital	Copenhagen	
Form of Government	constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government	
Number of Children per Woman	1.85	1.52
Average Age	40.1	40.3 not EU27, but average of the ten participating countries

[www.ipicture.de](http://www.ipicture.de); 13.09.2011

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2010/01/weodata>; 13.09.2011

Denmark consists of the Jutland Peninsula and more than 400 islands, including the Island of Zealand with Copenhagen, the largest city in the country and at the same time the capital. Denmark has 5,468,120 inhabitants (Danes 97.0 %, other 3.0 %), of

whom approximately 1.7 million live in the catchment area of the City of Copenhagen. The country maintains an extensive and modern transport network and has developed to become the hub of the North with the completion of the tunnel and bridge connections across the Great Belt and Öresund to Sweden.

Because of the exceptionally high birth rate (1.85 children per woman) in comparison to the EU (1.52 children per woman), and a low migration rate (the population rate: 2.5/1000), the population of Denmark is growing steadily. The proportion of people aged below 15 is currently at the level of 18.4 %, the number of people aged 15 to 64 is 66 % and the number of people over 65 is 15.6 %.

Life expectancy (data from 2008) of males at the level of 76.4 years of age and females at the level of 81.03 years of age is close to or below the EU average of 76.03 years for males and 83.1 years for females.

Faroe Islands, an archipelago in the North Atlantic, with the population of about 50,000 people (less than 1 % of the Danish population) and the Island of Greenland with 57,000 of inhabitants are considered autonomous equal nations in the Danish Kingdom which have their own political administration and are represented by 2 members in the Danish Parliament.

Nearly three quarters of all workers are employed in service industries, one of four employees work in the manufacturing sector. A characteristic feature of the Danish business structure is the large number of medium-sized industry and service enterprises. They are often highly specialised and technologically belong to the top class – for example Bang & Olufsen, Vestas, Danfoss, Ecco and Rockwool.

[www.ipicture.de](http://www.ipicture.de); 13.09.2011,

European Commission: The 2009 Ageing Report, Eurostat: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

<b>Participation Rate</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>Europe (EU 27)</b>
Participation Rate 15 – 64 (2008) males	84.0	77.8
Participation Rate 15 – 64 (2008) females	76.5	63.4
Old age dependency ratio (2008)	24	25
Old age dependency ratio (2050)	41	50

European Commission - DG for Economic and Social Affairs: The 2009 Ageing Report: economic and budgetary projections for the EU-27 Member States (2008-2060), Luxembourg 2009

The participation rate (15-64 year-olds) is the highest one is in comparison with the other BSR states. In Denmark, young people start to perform their profession about two years earlier than e.g. in Germany; significantly more Danish women work, especially after the phase of childcare, and the Danes on average choose retirement more than two years later than e.g. the Germans.

In March 2010, the unemployment rate in Denmark was at the level of 7.6 %, almost four times as high as before the onset of the global economic crisis (2008: 2.5). However, in comparison to the EU average, the country, with the value of 9.6%, does relatively good. Also the youth unemployment level of 14.2 % is low in comparison to other European countries (20.6 %).

In some industries there is already a shortage of skilled workers, so that Denmark seeks skilled workers, professionals, craftsmen and unskilled workers abroad; e.g. more than 10,000 people from Schleswig-Holstein commute to Denmark every day.

With a high participation rate, the rise of the functional dependency ratio can be lowered and the consequences of demographic change can be compensated for.

Source: Federal Agency for Employment of the Central Placement Office ZAV:  
[http://www.ba-auslandsvermittlung.de/lang\\_de/nn\\_535696/DE/LaenderEU/Daenemark/](http://www.ba-auslandsvermittlung.de/lang_de/nn_535696/DE/LaenderEU/Daenemark/); 13.09.2011

<b>Elderly Participation and Retirement</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>Europe (EU 27)</b>
Participation rate 55-64 (2008) males	67.5	57.3
Participation rate 55-64 (2008) females	55.1	38.2
Legal retirement age planned changes	65	
Actual retirement age (2008 unless otherwise stated)	61.3	61.4

European Commission - DG for Economic and Social Affairs: The 2009 Ageing Report: economic and budgetary projections for the EU-27 Member States (2008-2060), Luxembourg 2009

Apart from Sweden (73.2 %) and Norway (69.8 %), also the Danish employees remain very long in employment (61.3 %). The reasons for it are not in a threatening poverty in the old age, because all pensioners are entitled to the Danish social pension.

In Denmark, pensions are financed from taxes. The Danish pensioners all get the same amount of pension – it depends on the years of residence in Denmark, and not on the amount paid, in as e.g. in Germany. Thus, for example, a Dane who has not always worked, however, is over 65 and lived in Denmark for 40 years, is entitled to a pension, the so-called "folkepension," currently around € 800. The Danish employees are consciously working for the entry into the private additional pension. Many employment contracts indicate certain amounts which are to be saved up for the retirement.

Indicator for Work-Life-Balance	Denmark	Europe (EU 27)
Working hours fit well or very well with family or social obligations (2005)	87.8	79.4
Working hours fit well or very well with family or social obligations (2010)	93.5	81.5
work affects the health negatively (2005)	44.2	35.4
work affects the health negatively (2010)	24.9	25.0
(very) satisfied with the working conditions (2005)	93.4	82.3
(very) satisfied with the working conditions (2010)	94.9	82.3

European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Dublin 2008; First Findings 2010: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/smt/ewcs/results.htm>

The qualified support and promotion of small children has been declared a "national task" of Denmark. A "childminder" is a fully fledged, recognised profession which requires thorough education. They work as permanent employees for the community. They pay social and pension contributions and are entitled to the same time off as other employees. The average salary of a childminder is about EUR 2,800 per month. Thus, the child care remains affordable for parents; a full-time place costs EUR 300 per month, and in the case of siblings, parents pay even less. The municipalities subsidise the childminders and grant the missing two-thirds of the actual costs of child care from their budget. Childminders receive more than 100 hours of training; there is also professional consulting and reflection with community social workers. To ensure a family-like care situation for children, a childminder can generally have not more than four children to care for.

With a strong orientation towards gender equality, support for working parents, and relatively generous transfer payments for a limited period for a parent who stays at home due to the upbringing of children, the Danish family policy is in good accordance with the labour policy.

- High level of female employment

The employment rate in the case of women is unusually high: In 2005 it was at the level of 73.1% (79.4% for men). It is common in Denmark for men and women to pursue a full-time job. For the labour market, this means an enrichment of many talents and initiatives.

- Good balance between family life and career

Flexible working hours and since 2002 also flexible parental leave of 52 weeks, apart from the legally guaranteed child care from the 9th month to the school age, are services which allow families with children to return to the labour market.

- High participation rate

The employment rate is on average 75.7%, which is quite high in the EU comparison. Among industries in which employment will increase, there are public administration, education, social services and health care.

- A very high "happiness index"

In the "happiness index" collected around the world, Denmark, together with Sweden and the Netherlands, ranks second after Iceland. Besides the fact that the differences between the poor and the rich are relatively small, financial and social security is for the Danes a further source of satisfaction. These factors are found by the Danes i.a. at work, because Denmark is regarded as a good employer. According to the statistics concerning Denmark for the year 2007, the income inequality in Denmark is substantially lower than in the other EU Member States, due to a good state of employment and high incomes.

<http://www.vimu.info/>; 13.09.2011

[http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/lif\\_hap\\_net-lifestyle-happiness-net](http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/lif_hap_net-lifestyle-happiness-net); 13.09.2011

Federal Agency for Employment of the Central Placement Office ZAV

[http://www.ba-auslandsvermittlung.de/lang\\_de/nn\\_535696/DE/LaenderEU/Daenemark/](http://www.ba-auslandsvermittlung.de/lang_de/nn_535696/DE/LaenderEU/Daenemark/); 13.09.2011

Indicators for working conditions	Denmark	Europe (EU 27)
can carry out the current profession with 60 years (2005)	68.8	58.2
can carry out the current profession with 60 years (2010)	67.6	no data

European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Dublin 2008; First Findings2010: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/smt/ewcs/results.htm>

Denmark is not only very successful economically, but also well prepared for the ageing of the society. Already in the years 1997 to 1999, a state commission dealt explicitly with the investigation of older workers. Aspects, such as the abolition of a fixed retirement age and combating discrimination became more significant. Enterprises are supported in the development of their senior policy.

Hansen H. (2001): Active strategies for older workers. Comparative Welfare State Research. SFI Working Paper 02:2001;

see also <http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/2000/10/word/dk0008191s.doc> 30; 13.09.2011

The following measures have been put into practice:

- since 1998, free advice for SMEs on issues related to older workers

- financial support for companies employing older long-term unemployed (more than 48 years of age)
- self-activating groups for older job seekers (over 50 years of age) in the municipalities. Local employment offices to support the self-activating groups and information to businesses about their existence and that they can find workers there.

An essential summary of these Danish senior policy approaches is the fact that older labour force is not isolated and measures for supporting the elderly and the young workers are accepted.

Denmark's Labour Policy is possibly aimed at the entire Danish population to keep it healthy as long as possible in employment.

Flemming Larsen, F. & T. Bredgaard, Flexicurity and older workers on the Danish labour market - Background paper for the Flexicurity research programme (project 3)

[http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/faculties/frw/research/schoordijk/flexicurity/publications/externalpapers/carma\\_workingpaper04-1.pdf](http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/faculties/frw/research/schoordijk/flexicurity/publications/externalpapers/carma_workingpaper04-1.pdf); 13.09.2011

<http://www.s-o-l.ch/fr/projets/workage/produit%20final/pdf/Denbp.pdf>; 13.09.2011

[www.senior-job.dk](http://www.senior-job.dk); 13.09.2011

Indicators for lifelong learning and participation in vocational trainings	Denmark	Europe (EU 27)
European Lifelong Learning Index (ELLI) (2010)	75,65	52.06 [not EU27, but average of the eight participating countries]
participated in the last 12 months at employer-paid trainings (2005)	36.3	26.1
participated in the last 12 months at employer-paid trainings (2010)	44.0	33.7]

European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Dublin 2008; First Findings2010: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/smt/ewcs/results.htm>

European Lifelong Learning Indicators; Bertelsmann-Stiftung, [www.elli.org](http://www.elli.org)

Responsibility for a high standard of living in Denmark is i.a. borne by the Danish government and the social-democratic Prime Minister, Poul N. Rasmussen who conducted a reform of the Danish labour market in the mid-1990s. Because of the subsequent recovery of the labour market, it was called "the Danish job miracle." The reforms are conducted under the motto "Support and Demand", and they increasingly connect the reference to the state support services with the obligation in the form of skills or labour.

At the same time, the Danish vocational education system has been reformed in the recent years. A transparent and flexible vocational education system has been created, which is based on the concept of life-long learning and has shifted its focus:

- from teaching to learning;
- from an emphasis on qualifications to an emphasis on skills;
- from traditional classroom teaching to more sophisticated forms of instruction, adapted to the needs of the individual;
- from relatively limited to broad access routes;
- from standardised to flexible and modularised educational offers.

The ELLI Index in Denmark, compared to the other eight countries examined here (except for Norway and Lithuania) is at the highest position with 75.65 (Poland is at the rear with 29.35).

On 1 January 2001, a reform of the adult education and further training came into force. A "parallel adult education system" was introduced, i.e.:

- Participants can acquire the same skills and qualifications as in the regular educational system for young people.
- Adults may take credit for the competencies they have already earned.
- The educational opportunities for adults with low level of education can be improved.
- Resources are used in a better way.

A majority of measures under the adult education and further training are offered free of charge and financed by the general taxation system.

A new collective Education and Training Financing Fund (AUF Arbejdsmarkedets Uddannelses-finansiering) was established as a result of the reform. All employers pay a tax to the fund for each full-time employed. Therefore, the employers are entitled to the receipt of grants from the fund when members of their company participate in continuing training.

A Statens Voksenuddannelsesstøtte – SVU (Public Education Support for Adults) was introduced for the participants of adult education and further training. The participants have therefore two possibilities, either through the SVU-System or through VEU-godtgørelse (Adult and Further Training Allowance) in the amount of unemployment benefits. Consequently, an above-average participation in vocational training measures can be achieved.

In 2008, the Danish Working Environment Council (DWEC) initiated a project to include Occupational Safety and Health strategies (OSH) in the curriculum in Vocational Education and Training on the upper secondary school level (16 - 19 years old) in cooperation with the Danish Ministry of Education. The DWEC and the ministry prepared a manual showing teachers a pre-didactic way to include OSH competences, and then held two conferences to inspire teachers how to integrate

OSH in different subjects. Similar conferences were held in the second half of 2009. Meanwhile, the DWEC is also planning a similar project for higher education.

OSH Strategy in Denmark: Danish strategy contributions (2005-2010)

### **Autonomous Tariff Policy Allows Flexicurity**

Danish workers, with 85% of trade union membership, are the best organised nation in the world. Since employers are appropriately strongly organised, collective agreements are concluded without the interference of the state. Legally, the state regulates for example only the unemployment insurance, occupational health and vocational training. Owing to a special labour legislation system, there is also a legal autonomy. This results in stable collective agreements for a multi-annual period.

The trade unions are aware of the Denmark's position as an exporting nation. Their wage demands are reasonable, so the obvious strong competitiveness of the Danish goods is not playful.

The most recent decisions within the framework of collective agreements include

- increasing the annual leave entitlement from five to 6 weeks in the future annually,
- creation of reserves of an increasing part of the remuneration for pensions and
- an improved right to training.

In the collective agreement of 2007, the following was made possible in many branches

- men are entitled to a 3-week paternity leave with full pay
- the maximum duration of benefit payments halved from eight to four years
- and a supporting education and training policy for the unemployed is offered.

Also good cooperation between trade unions and management is the implementation of the flexicurity policy.

### **The "Golden Triangle of Flexicurity"**

A high degree of adaptability of the companies which does not comprise the security for workers was shaped by the Danish labour market model "Golden Triangle of Flexicurity." It combined social and financial security of employees with the ability of employers to dismiss employees at very short notice. This allows the company to adjust to changing economic cycles without degradation. On the other hand, the dismissed are financially well secured. In the case of losing their job, they receive high unemployment benefits, which do not deviate significantly from the remuneration.

## 1. Flexible Labour Market

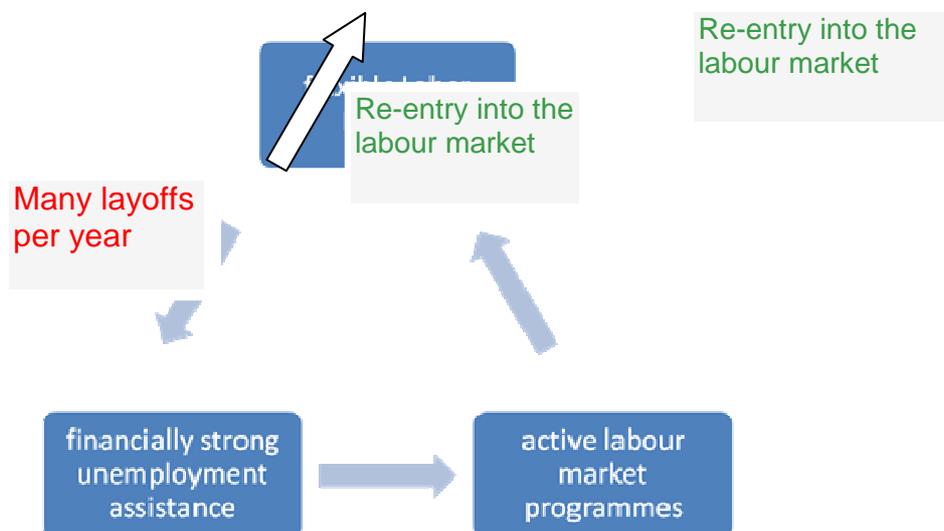
The Danish labour market is considered one of the most flexible among the OECD countries. The flexibility level of labour markets can be measured by the indicators of the employment protection regulations and job mobility, which are based on the OECD data.

Until 1989, it was possible for the Danish employers to dismiss workers without any compensation payment. In 1989, a statutory provision was introduced that employers had to finance the first day of unemployment for each dismissed, insured unemployed person. This regulation was extended to the first two days of unemployment in 1993. This measure of employment protection, which was low in comparison with the international standards, was justified by the necessity of a flexible adjustment to an open market economy with a large number of small and medium-sized enterprises. The requirements for the union acceptance of this low protection against dismissal are relatively high public wage replacement benefits from the first day of unemployment. A deregulated element of the labour market policy is therefore contradicted by a balancing social flanking.

A further indicator of the labour market flexibility is the average duration of employment relationships. Also in this respect Denmark shows relatively low values. While a Danish workplace can be filled anew after an average of 7.9 years, this period for example in Germany is 9.7 years.

In a flexible labour market, the Danes are quick to adapt and reorient themselves. New professional challenges require the employee mobility, which results in high internal migration (in the year 2006, statistically every sixth Dane moved once; 34% of the registered relocations are connected with the job-related internal migration).

<http://www.ambwien.um.dk/de/menu/Daenemark/FlexicurityDerDaenischeArbeitsmarkt/>; 13.09.2011  
WSI releases Hans Böckler Foundation 2/2003: [http://boecklertemp.internetmanufaktur.de/pdf/wsimit\\_2003\\_02\\_braun.pdf](http://boecklertemp.internetmanufaktur.de/pdf/wsimit_2003_02_braun.pdf), 13.09.2011



The demographic future of Europe, Berlin Institute for Population and Development, dtv, Munich, 2008

## 2. Strong Financial Assistance of the Unemployed

The Ministry of Employment has the overall responsibility for measures in relation to all groups of unemployed persons, i.e. both unemployed persons on social assistance as well as unemployed persons receiving unemployment benefits.

The Danish system of unemployment insurance is based on voluntary membership. Apart from Finland, Sweden and Belgium, Denmark is one of the four EU countries with voluntary unemployment insurance.

Currently, the insurance system is managed by 35 independent "unemployment funds" (A-kasser), 2 of the 35 unemployment funds are intended for the self-employed. They are organised in accordance with the trade union organisation forms partly and grouped by branches and professional groups and partly by the "status" (e.g. unskilled and semi-skilled women, academics, self-employed) and are separated from the system of labour administration.

Only members of unemployment funds can claim unemployment benefits, partial pensions and early retirement. Although the unemployment funds are administered by trade unions, the union membership is not required for the receipt of unemployment benefits. All persons between 18 and 63 years of age who have completed a job or at least a 18-month training may become a member. Currently, approximately 80 % of the workforce are members of an unemployment fund. The amount of contributions is based on earnings but differentiated on the basis of the activity status. Thereby, the contributions of the unemployed and part-time workers are lower than in the case of full-time workers. The system for protection against unemployment is formally designed as insurance with contributions paid in by workers, where the state finances most of them. Municipalities are responsible for social security and labour market integration of uninsured workers and welfare recipients.

WSI releases of the Hans Böckler Foundation 2/2003:

[http://boecklertemp.internetmanufaktur.de/pdf/wsimit\\_2003\\_02\\_braun.pdf](http://boecklertemp.internetmanufaktur.de/pdf/wsimit_2003_02_braun.pdf); 13.09.2011

## 3. Active labour market programmes

In addition, the unemployed have a good chance to quickly find a new job, because Denmark is strongly committed to training and retraining. After a year of unemployment, the unemployed have the right to participate in individual and targeted labour market measures. The good opportunities for training result in the fact that industries with labour shortages and new industries will not need to wait for the required labour force.

<http://www.ambwien.um.dk/de/menu/Daenemark/FlexicurityDerDaenischeArbeitsmarkt/>; 13.09.2011

The unemployment period is divided into a period of passive receiving of unemployment benefits (dagpengeperiode) and an "active period." The amount of

unemployment benefits is the same in both periods. In the latter period there is a right and obligation to participate in the employment measures.

Active measures which have the main goal of the integration of the unemployed in the labour market and offer skilled workers to other companies are for example

- Legal entitlement to a study leave:  
Both the employed and the unemployed persons are legally entitled to a study leave for a period of 1 to 52 weeks. In the case of the unemployed, there is an entitlement to the full amount of the unemployment benefits. For the employed, the approval of a study leave requires the consent of the employer.
- Special programs for the support of the unemployed young people:  
The unemployed young people have a right and obligation to participate in an 18-month employment measure already after 6 months of unemployment.
- Job rotation for the qualification of the workforce with a simultaneous market integration of the unemployed:

Employees from an enterprise go for training; for this time, the unemployed are used as representatives. Thus, a continuous training of the workforce is possible without the interference of operations and increase employment opportunities for the employed.

WSI releases of the Hans Böckler Foundation 2/2003: [http://boecklertemp.internetmanufaktur.de/pdf/wsimit\\_2003\\_02\\_braun.pdf](http://boecklertemp.internetmanufaktur.de/pdf/wsimit_2003_02_braun.pdf); 13.09.2011

## **Health and Safety**

The Danish Working Environment Authority (WEA)/Arbejdstilsynet is an agency under the auspices of the Ministry of Employment. The WEA is the authority which contributes to health and safety at all Danish workplaces. This is done by

- carrying out inspections at companies: The WEA screens all enterprises with employees, then red, yellow and green Smileys are published on the WEA's website and allow the general public to see how an enterprise is doing in terms of health and safety
- drawing up rules on health and safety at work
- providing information on health and safety at work.

Thus, initially a demographic problem awareness is sparked nationwide among all stakeholders in all spheres of activity.

## **Certification Programmes**

A consultancy notice is a notice ordering an enterprise to seek advice from an authorised health and safety consultant with a view to solving one or more of its health and safety problems. In addition, a consultancy notice may be issued to

investigate the psychological working environment. Such a notice is issued if the WEA has a reason to suspect the enterprise of having psychological working environment problems.

It is the health and safety consultant's task to assist the enterprise in solving the health and safety problem(s) subject to the improvement notice.

Furthermore, the consultant is to assist the enterprise with a view to strengthening the preventive health and safety activities. The consultant's job therefore includes assisting the enterprise in incorporating the solving of the specific health and safety problems in its workplace assessment.

A consultancy notice may be issued against an enterprise or a legal entity if it has received 15 decisions on violations of the health and safety legislation in at least two different production units or against a client who has failed to fulfil his duty to draw up a plan for safety and health.

<http://arbejdstilsynet.dk/en/engelsk/inspection/consultancy-notice.aspx>; 13.09.2011

When an enterprise meets the requirements to obtain a certificate, it may contact an accredited inspection or certification body. Accredited bodies must fulfil certain requirements with regard to their competence and capacity and they are supervised in this respect and in respect of the way they perform inspections/certifications. Thus, the accreditation guarantees that inspections/certifications are always of a high professional quality and performed on a uniform basis. The inspection or certification body issues a health and safety certificate if the requirements are met.

Benefits of a health and safety certificate are:

- the enterprise sends a positive signal to the surrounding world
- it becomes easier for the enterprise to attract new and retain existing employees
- health and safety at the enterprise is improved thereby increasing the welfare and motivation of its employees
- the enterprise improves its cooperation with suppliers and customers.

The certificate can be obtained according to two models and the enterprises are free to choose the model and the accredited body they wish to use:

1. Accredited inspection of the enterprise or of one or more of its production units

The inspection model has been developed for small enterprises where it would not be natural to establish the management systems that are required to obtain a certificate through certification. However, the inspection model may also be applied by larger enterprises where it is not traditional to establish management systems.

An enterprise which chooses to obtain a certificate through inspection must meet a number of requirements both in relation to its individual health and safety

initiatives and in relation to the material working environment. The requirements include the formulation of a health and safety policy, preparation of a workplace assessment and written documentation of other factors concerning its individual initiatives. Basically, all working processes and all health and safety conditions must be inspected.

In order to obtain a health and safety certificate, the enterprise or the production unit must not have any health and safety problems that would result in an improvement notice from the Danish Working Environment Authority. A certificate according to the inspection model is valid for three years and subject to renewal.

2. Accredited certification of the working environment management system of the enterprise or of one or more of its production units.

For accredited certification, importance is attached to the enterprises having established a working environment management system ensuring continued momentum in the health and safety work. The management system is subject to a number of special requirements, but by and large they correspond to the requirements in relation to other working environment and quality management systems. In terms of contents, the requirements of the inspection model - both in relation to the material working environment and to the individual health and safety initiatives of the enterprise - must be integrated in the management system.

After accredited certification, a health and safety certificate is issued for up to three years. The certification body will inspect the system at least once a year.

<http://arbejdstilsynet.dk/en/engelsk/inspection/certificate.aspx>; 13.09.2011

3. The Danish Working Environment Awards, which were established in 2006 by the DEWC (The Danish Working Environment Council / Arbejdsmiljørådet: a national body for all occupational health and safety issues), are given in November every year to the companies that perform unusual and interesting efforts to improve their occupational safety and health conditions, in four different categories:
  - industrial accidents
  - psychosocial work environment
  - noise, and
  - musculoskeletal disorders.

The award winners are chosen by the panel of the representatives from the Council. The awards are intended to promote the action plan and inspire the broad public to work on improving their working environment by recognising the excellence in reducing the aforementioned problems in workplaces.

The study "**Health Promotion Activities in the Workplace**" describes the outcome of health promotion activities and their influences for psycho-social and physical work environment and the employee's health. The report from the DEWC from March 2009 is based on a survey of 1.461 employees at 32 workplaces. This report is the first of its kind, internationally as well as in Denmark, to include such a large number of employee respondents. It also indicates the following:

- Employees consider health promotion activities in the workplace as a positive thing and do not feel forced to participate in them,
- Employees participate in the activities more often if the management is supportive of health promotion activities in both their actions and attitudes.

<http://www.amr.dk/Default.aspx?ID=923>; 13.09.2011

As a part of the European Week for Health and Safety at Work, organised by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in October 2006, the European awards Programme recognised best practices to improve health and safety of young workers. Denmark was awarded for the Campaign: "**Interactive educational software about risks in retail**"

Many young people are employed in the retail sector and the number of work-related injuries for young people under 18 is substantial compared to other sectors. The Sector Work Environment Council for Retail decided to produce interactive educational software – 'the training program' – to inform and instruct young people about working in retail.

This development was based on an assessment of working environment problems and an analysis of the target group. The aim was to make it relevant and interesting to young people and instructive for employers.

The training program uses 'informative stories' (lærerige historier) to demonstrate the importance of safety, how work may influence daily life and how to act safely, with a section on 'Good practice' (Den gode praksis). The program uses sarcasm and humour, fast photo changes, trendy language, and up-to-date music and graphics inspired by popular Danish music videos and comic TV-shows for the youth.

Most injuries and accidents involving young people often happen early in their employment. Risks occur especially during manual handling and transporting goods, from bad postures, lone work or working when and where there is an increased risk of attacks or muggings, operating dangerous machines and using dangerous substances.

A questionnaire was produced and provisional results show positive reactions about the instruction, the acquired knowledge and the usage in daily life. Users have described the programme as: interesting, educational, different, funny (in a 'cool' way), and appealing.

[http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/ew2006/awards/How\\_easy\\_can\\_it\\_%20be](http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/ew2006/awards/How_easy_can_it_%20be); 17.09.2011,  
<http://www.barhandel.dk>; 17.09.2011

The National Research Centre for the Working Environment (NRCWE) is a government research institute under the Ministry of Employment. The mission of the NRCWE is to monitor, analyse and explore conditions in the working environment of importance to health, safety and work role functioning.

In April 2010 the NRCWE has published a Summary, Main Conclusions and Recommendations on "**Mental Health, Sickness Absence and Return to Work.**"

As the core message, the NRCWE has shown high prevalence of mental health problems in the Danish population. The NRCWE estimates the total direct and indirect costs associated with mental health problems in Denmark at the level of EUR 7.4 billion. Another important key message is that mental health problems, unlike many physical health problems and diseases, often occur before or at the beginning of the working life, and thus negatively affect a range of functional capabilities, including the ability to cope with labour.

The action recommendations of the NRCWE are divided into two groups:

1. Recommendations and support strategies for a return to working life for employees who are already on sick leave due to mental problems
  - Early detection and treatment
  - Investigation of the reduced functioning of the affected employees in relation to different types of working tasks
  - Adapting working tasks
  - Coordinated success by involving relevant stakeholders
  - Advice and cooperation to ensure a durable return to work.
  - Supporting social reintegration into the workplace
2. General recommendations to prevent absenteeism due to illness on the basis of mental health problems.
  - Development of a general corporate policy which takes into consideration the sickness absence and return to work
  - Implementation of a "cultural diversity" in the workplace: Information and openness in relation to mental problems prevent the exclusion of those affected.
  - Workplace adjustments: Support for the health and well-being, reduction of stress factors, psychological counselling.

The EU Council Resolution (2007-2012) wants to encourage the national research centres, and thus it is a task for the NRCWE, to exchange information and collaborate on their programs at the national and European level, focusing on

problem solving and on the prompt transfer of results to enterprises, in particular SMEs. Therefore, the NRCWE acts as the Danish focal point of the Baltic Sea Network on Occupational Health and Safety.

<http://www.arbejdsmiljoforskning.dk/en/om-os>; 17.09.2011

### Good Practice Examples

In the recent years, **Danfoss** in Nordborg/South Jutland has had difficulties in recruiting qualified workers. The problem is that this country is a part of the border area of Denmark, so it is difficult to get the Danes to resettle. On the other hand, it is close to the border with Germany and in Schleswig-Holstein there has been high unemployment in the recent years. Bureaucratic and cultural barriers contribute to such an extent that not many German workers are coming to overcome the shortage of skilled workers in the South Jutland. This led in 2004 to a situation that the "Bitten and Mads Clausen Foundation" - Danfoss - invested NOK 10 million in a research project. Enterprises within the same industry should improve cross-border cooperation along with researchers and educational centres. Products are developed and jobs are created in the border region through cooperation.

Poul Erik Tindbaek presented an innovative strategy of the City of Aarhus: **Compulsory Pre-Retirement Counselling**. Former patterns of retirement have to be replaced by more active ageing. Financial contributions for seniors are needed

- to keep up a sufficiently large labour force
- for voluntary tasks and
- to reduce welfare costs by improving people's life-styles – and postponing the necessity of elderly care.

Pre-retirement counselling provides a tool box to change these prospects into

- more seniors staying longer in the labour market
- more seniors getting involved in voluntary work
- and more seniors being socially and practically self-reliant.

Recent evaluations of pre-retirement courses for elderly employees document that pre-retirement counselling must be compulsory for elderly employees in the EU.

The medium-sized Danish enterprise **Skousen Husholdningsmaskiner A/S** has established a "Senior Club" or a "Senior Database."

This database lists former employees (according to the pension) and employees aged 55+. Employees will be appointed from this pool in the case of a difficult personnel situation. Older people also benefit from these institutions: they facilitate the transition from working life to the retirement.

At the **TDC**, the largest telecommunications provider in Denmark, in addition to the working arrangements, it offers a wider variety of other services which are indirectly

aligned with the balance between the family life and work. At the TDC, the offers fall within the broad concept of the gender equality.

The measures are based on the idea that highly qualified employees are not working only because of the content or the reputation of the company at TDC, but also because there are good working conditions. For example in the case of the paternity leave: the additional benefits from the company also apply to men. TDC offers here additional legal regulations and up to three months of paternity leave, in which case two weeks can be used after the birth of a child and the other ten weeks within the first year of the child's life. In addition, same-sex couples who are in Denmark assimilated as married couples shall have the same offers of adoption leave as heterosexual couples. In 2004, the TDC initiated a campaign within this context in order to increase the use of the paternity leave. As a result of this campaign, within the area of the market analysis – a section of the Department for Market Research and Analysis within the TDC Solutions – out of twelve males working there, seven took up paternity leave, including the management. Just because the managers themselves took advantage of the statutory benefits, the employees had the credentials to apply for the paternity leave as well. The example shows the importance of the "lived culture" in relation to the formal legal options. The behaviour of managers is crucial to the actual use of services in the enterprise.

<http://www.kibis.at/pdf/wlb/0407-FamArbWeltGBFDK-Kurzfg.pdf>; 17.09.2011

The **Social Mentor Scheme** is a newly ended project conducted by The National Labour Market Authority. It is a support system, where an employee from the company or school or an external consultant helps a person obtain or sustain a job. The local Job Centre provides the education. The mentor scheme is very flexible and includes all situations where a mentor is needed. Both businesses and job centres themselves can make an employee available as a social mentor for a period of time. The government reimburses 50% to the municipality. About 140 people are already educated as a mentor. The mentor training program provides the following capabilities:

- Active listening and feedback
- An appreciative approach (communication)
- Conflict management
- Dealing with resistance

"Social Mentors is a great success in helping mentally vulnerable people get attached to labor" by Pernille Steen Pedersen Administrator in the National Labour Market Authority; 13.04.2011